

A

# REVIEW

## OF THE

# STATE

## OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Thursday, January 29. 1708.

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**T**here's no way of talking to you good People; I mean in order to Conviction, like Demonstration, nor will any Demonstrations, *such is the Thwart Current of our Times*, affect you, but such as may be brought home to every Man's Door, that may be seen as it were without Eyes, and that when it is read, must strike a true Union upon the Understanding of every Hearer. Well, since it must be so, such Demonstration you shall have.

Why must this Prohibition of *India Goods* be so advantageous to us, says a knot of Objectors to me, that have been these two or three Years biting this Thong, that has frangled their private Gain, and who're pine at losing their particular Profit, tho' they enjoy'd it at the Price of Starving the Nation? Why, say they, must it be so

very advantagious now, more than formerly; we had Manufactures before, and our Poor had Employment before, and why must they make such a Clamour now, more than ever?

This is the reason, why I say we must lay aside Argument, and come directly to Demonstrations and Matters of Fact; it is true, that from the Restoration of King Charles II. to the Revolution, *in which time, all kinds of Indian, French, and Italian wrought Silks were freely imported*; we had still our own Manufactures going on, and our Poor were tollerably well employ'd.

And tho' there are great Objections, which would fairly lie against the Particulars, yet I choose to grant, for the sake of the Argument, all that our Opposers allege,

edge, the easier to come at, and the stronger to enforce the great thing I am pursuing, call'd *Demonstration*.

Let the Gentlemen then come to Particulars, and compare the quantity of *Indian Goods* Imported, in the Years before the Revolution, and the Quantity Imported from the Revolution to the Prohibition, and they will find the Proportion beyond all Supposition; and speaking of the particular sorts prohibited, such as Damasks, Chints, Pelongs, stained Callicoes, Handkerchiefs, and other Silks, they stand in the Books plainly to be seen, regarding one another thus, some as 126 to 2540; others, as 23 to 315; others, as 15 to 709; and again, as 1 to 200; the numbers of Ships going to the *Indies*, advanc'd from 2 or 3, and sometimes but 1 in a Year, sometimes 3 in two Year, to 57 Ships sent out in 11 Months, or a little more, and to Fleets of 6, 9 and 11 Ships coming home together; the *Tavistock* in her first Voyage, brought home 9700 and some odd pieces of rich Damasks, and above 200000 pieces of Silks and Callicoes of several kinds, that directly Rival'd our own Manufactures.

These are Demonstrations, and tho' they are but few, of the many I might bring, and of more I purpose to bring in this Argument, yet these may serve to satisfy any reasonable Man, that tho' the *East India* and *French* Trades were in being in those days, and in their Proportion did streighten us in our Manufactures, yet the Grievance was young, the degree of it small, and the People who did not naturally delight in complaining, were not alarm'd with a general Destruction as they were afterward, when the encrease of those Goods, and the surprizing turn of the general fancy of the Nation to those Goods, as a Fashion, shew'd it self like a Flood, that should drown and bear before it our whole Manufacture, and like the Locusts of *Egypt* devour every pleasant thing.

If you see in your Weekly Bills, 40 or 50, or sometimes 100 per Week dye of the Feavour, nay, if 7 or 8, or 10 are put in of the Spotted Feaver, the Politick Word for the Plague; you cry it is a Sickly Time;

or so; but if 30 or 40 a Week should fall of the Plague, and Families be infested with it; this alarms the Town, the Rich flee into the Country, the Poor run to Church to the Prayers, that perhaps never gave God Almighty that trouble for some Years before; and the Magistrates shut up Houses, and Exercise their Authority, to prevent the Mischief proving Universal.

Upon the Frontiers, if a few Moreders or Straglers rove abroad to steal Poultry, and pick up what they can get; the little Towns are not very uneasy, and their common Watch is their security; but if large Detachments of the Enemy appear, or the Armies are advancing, they take the alarm all over the Country; away they run to the Fortifi'd Towns, and remove their best Effects, or get Safeguards on paying large Contributions.

I need not explain these Simillies, I hope, they are apposite and just; the *India* Trade in the Days of the late King *Charles* and King *James*, did indeed make little Invasions upon our Trade; it had its ill Consequences upon our Manufactures, and as far as it went, without doubt, the Damage had its Proportion; but the Wound was small, the Grief insensible, and it was not felt so, as to give us any concern; besides, we in *England* are not over apt to apply preventive Physick, or regard the mischiefs we see only, till we feel them; and thus this Distemper, like a slow Feavour, grew upon us, till it began to affect the Vitals of our Trade; and then we grew light headed, fell into Convulsions, and had gone stark mad, had not the Physicians of the State, I mean the Parliament, apply'd the only Specifick, and by at once removing the Cause, put a full stop to the Effects, which were come to that height, that I may modestly say, border'd very near upon the Incurable, and would have proved Mortal to our Trade, if it had gone but a little farther.

If any one pretend to enquire, wherein they proved Injurious to our Manufactures, and alledge, they only invaded our *French* and *Italian* Trade, from whence we, before that,



that, Imported a vast quantity of wrought Silks.

This is so well known to every body that wears Cloths, especially the Ladies, that it would be needless to enquire into the Particulars; only this may be said, *and this is one Reason, why I have all along named the French Trade, (viz.)* they were both equally and in Proportion grievous to our Trade, I mean still our Manufactures; they both interfered with our poor Peoples Em-

ployment at home, and both were paid for by our ready Money abroad; and these things I hope may be called Demonstrations, if not, I'll promise you some that shall be acknowledged for such, in my next; when I shall come to show you the plain Consequences of this Flux of *Indis* Goods upon us, and how it visibly sunk our Manufactures, ruin'd our Tradesmen, scatter'd our Poor, sunk our Rents, and depopulated our Towns.

## MISCELLANEA.

**T**HIS Affair of the *East-India* Trade is a weighty and a large Subject, and I purpose to go thro' it with as little interruption as possible; yet I know the aversion of our Paper Readers to a long Story, and therefore I must reserve a small part of this Work, to divert them with the usual Variety—And indeed I am pleas'd to do it here, by the importunity of our Ridle-Mongers.

To divert the World, I bestow'd an Enigma upon you, and at my own Expence aim'd Prize to the Person that resolv'd it—Now after one Gentleman had hit upon it, here comes several more with their Guesses of the same Nature, and some nearer than others, but two claim to have been exactly the same, and these both claim the Prize too and will have it; that by the Words *any Person*, mention'd in the Proposal, I was oblig'd to give the same Prize to every body that guess'd the Meaning; and from one of these Objectors, as I suppose, I receiv'd the following Letter.

S I R,

**Y**OU are desir'd to give your Opinion of the following Case in the next Paper.

A Sea Captain put forth a Declaration in these Words—That any Person able to Serve Her Majesty, that shall Voluntarily enter with in 8 Days, to serve on Board the ship he Commands, shall receive a Reward of 2 l. 4 s.

*upon this, 4 or 500. enter themselves within the time, and claim the Reward respectively; but the Captain refuses to give it to any, but the first that enter'd himself; and says any Person that enters, is not every Person enter'd; that tho' they answer'd his Design in coming on Board, yet he never design'd to reward every Person that should so do.*

Q. I. *Whether the Words any Person, will not comprehend every Person, that so did wish in the time limited?*

Q. II. *Why may not the 2d, 3d, 4th or 5th Person, or any Person, as well as the first that enter'd?*

I am very far from being afraid to publish this Letter, I mean as to the Case in hand, and my Answer shall be very plain and direct; It is true, for ought I know, that if such a Proclamation were publish'd, People might understand that every Person, &c. should have the Queen's Bounty; but let me tell my Objector, they would understand it so from the Nature of the Thing, not from the Words; and for this I appeal to the common way of our Wording Publick Acts—Where to make it general the very Word *any Person* being taken for Singular, is made Plural by the addition of the Words, *or Persons*—And so in our Acts of Parliament, *any Person or Persons*, if then *any Person* signify'd every Person, the rest would be Nonsense, and the whole Parliament be brought in for the Absurdi-



ty ; but farther yet, it may be said all our Proclamations of Bounty are better worded ; for Example the Proclamation in the *Gazette*, of but *Thursday* last, confutes him directly, being for the same thing, a *Bounty to Seamen*, where to make it explicit, 'tis express'd, not any *Seaman*, for that had been Singular, but *all such Seamen*, Col. 1. l. 2, 7. — And again, *every such Seaman*. ib. Co. 1. l. 18. and so thro' the whole Proclamation ; thus it is plain, the Case is directly against him Grammatically, and any Person can mean but any one Person.

But if he Judges by the Nature of the thing, then indeed the Proclamation will be understood every Person ; and yet as he puts it to be done by a Captain of a Ship, it is against him too ; for suppose ten thousand Men offer themselves, and he wants but 3 or 400, the Man would be ruin'd by the very same Argument — 'Tis plain, the Captain means as many as his Case or Ship calls for ; nay, even in the Queens Proclamation, Suppose two or three Counties, or 200000 Men should come on Board Her Majesty's Fleet, and by Virtue of the Proclamation claim the Bounty ; would not the Government immediately revoke the Proclamation, and refuse the Crowd, Declaring they will take no more than will serve to Man the Navy, being the plain Meaning of the Proclamation ?

These things I think reach the Case exactly, and as the Nature of the thing, cannot suppose the Author was to give away 2 l. 4 s. — to every Person that should guess a Riddle, and so might pay 50 or 100 l. to make you Laugh ; so in the Publick Sense of Things, any Person will by any reasonable Man, be taken for any one Person ; and that one Person for the first Comer ; and if this does not satisfy, I shall be sorry for their want of Temper ; but as I design'd only to divert the Reader, I think 'tis hard they should expect to make one pay so dear for it — And this I shall expect they will accept for an Answer.

††† The Reader is desir'd to correct the following Error in our last Review, Viz. l. 4. pag. 600 for 207. read 20 s.

#### ADVERTISEMENT.

Lately Publish'd,

A New Description of the World, delineating Europe, Asia, Africa, and

America ; with a Map and Tables of the Empires, Kingdoms, Provinces, and Cities therein, together with a Chronological and Historical Account of the Emperors, Kings, Princes, Governments, Religion, Languages, Customs, Commodities, Revolutions, and Rarities thereof. By H. Curson, Gent. Sold by John Morphew, near Stationers-Hall.

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